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➤GENERAL NOTES.◀

An Inscription from a Tomb in El-Kab.—An inscription, which appears to us highly significant, is found in one of the tombs at El-Kab. Judging from the peculiarity of the language, from the style of the internal pictorial decoration of the rock-chamber, but principally from the name of its former possessor, Baba, the tomb must have been erected in the times immediately before the Eighteenth Dynasty. Although no royal escutcheon ornaments the walls of the tomb, to give us information about the exact time of its construction, yet the following considerations are calculated to instruct us on this point, and to fill up the gap satisfactorily. Among the members of the great family of the Thirteenth Dynasty, and the greater number of whose tombs are situated in the rocky necropolis at El-Kab, Baba appears in the third generation as the surname of a certain Sebek-tut the father of queen Nubkhas. In the pedigree of the family of the captain Aahmes at El-Kab the name Baba appears again, and this time as the second appellation of our hero's father, Abana, a captain under king Ra-Sekenen (Taa III.). If we are not mistaken, this is the Baba, whose tomb, situated near that of Aahmes at El-Kab promises us important disclosures. For the whole posterity of Aahmes, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, repose in their progenitor's tomb, and in the pits in the rock, which Pahir, the ancient governor of Eileithyia prepared for himself and them. We should, however, look in vain for the sepulchral chamber of their ancestor, Baba, unless it be that rock-tomb of a Baba in the neighborhood of that of Aahmes. The inscription, which is found in the sacrificial hall of this tomb, on the back wall opposite the entrance door, contains the following description, in a style of child-like simplicity, of his existence on earth, blessed by his great wealth in children.

"The chief at the table of the sovereign, Baba, the risen again, speaks thus: I loved my father; I honored my mother; my brothers and my sisters loved me. I went out of the door of my house with a benevolent heart; I stood there with refreshing hand; splendid were my preparations of what I collected for the festal day. Mild was (my) heart, free from violent anger. The gods bestowed upon me abundant prosperity on earth. The city wished me health and a life full of enjoyment. I punished the evildoers. The children who stood before me in the town during the days which I fulfilled were—great and small—60; just as many beds were provided for them, just as many chairs (?), just as many tables (?). They all consumed 120 ephahs of durra, the milk of 3 cows, 52 goats, and 9 she asses. a hin of balsam, and 2 jars of oil.

"My words may seem a jest to a gainsayer. But I call the God Month to witness that what I say is true. I had all this prepared in my house; in addition I put cream in the store-chamber, and beer in the cellar in a more than sufficient number of hin measures.

"I collected corn, as a friend of the harvest god. I was watchful at the time of sowing. And when a famine arose, lasting many years, I distributed corn to the city each year of famine."

Not the smallest doubt can be raised as to whether the last words of the inscription relate to an historical fact or not: to something definite, or to something only general. However strongly we may be inclined to recognize a general way of speaking in the narrative of Ameni where "years of famine" are spoken

of, just as strongly does the context of the present statement compel us to refer this record of "*a famine lasting many years*" to an epoch historically defined. Now since famines succeeding one another on account of a deficiency of water in the overflowing of the Nile are of the very greatest rarity, and history knows and mentions only one example, namely, the seven years' famine under the Pharaoh of Joseph;—since Baba (or, if any one prefers to say, the Babas, for the most part the contemporaries of the Thirteenth and Seventeenth Dynasties) lived and worked under the king Ra-Sekenen Taa III. in the ancient city of El-Kab about the same time in which Joseph exercised his office under one of the Hyksos kings;—there remains for a satisfactory conclusion but one fair inference: that the "*many years of famine*" in the days of Baba must exactly correspond to the *seven years of famine* under Joseph's Pharaoh, who was one of the Shepherd Kings. We leave it to the judgment of the reader to form his own opinion as to the probability of this most obvious agreement between two different records of the same extraordinary occurrence. At all events, in this comparison, no one will be able to accuse us of exaggeration or searching after far-fetched arguments. The simple words of the biblical account, and the inscription in the tomb of Baba, are too clear and convincing to leave any room for the charge of a possible misunderstanding.—*From Brugsch's Egypt under the Pharaohs.*

The Hittite Empire.—The Bible is not a mere compendium of history. It is the revelation of a purpose of mercy. In all its unfoldings we have sketches of peoples and things, so far as they concern the great purpose of the book. It often refers to a great people called the Hittites. From the time of Abraham to the Captivity the Hittites move on parallel lines with the chosen people.

We see them carrying out with formal courtesy a shrewd bargain with the father of the faithful. We see their serried line of chariots opposing Joshua on his entrance into the promised land, and in the decisive battle by Lake Merom. We see their soldiers of fortune leading the hosts of David and Solomon, and their women in the harems of the same powerful monarchs; and finally we see the Syrian army flying in panic from the siege of Samaria for fear of the "kings of the Hittites."

Now, although the Bible is not a mere compendium of history, its veracity is deeply involved in the historic accuracy of its statements; but the Hittites had no place in classic history, and therefore it was supposed by some that the Bible references to them could not be true.

There was a strong presumption that an important people could scarcely have dropped completely out of history, but the strong presumption did not warrant the unscientific conclusion that the Bible narrative was untrue. It was just possible that classic history might be defective regarding a people of whom sacred history had much to say.

On this subject we have reached solid ground. We can now confidently appeal from assertion to certainty. In recent years Egypt and Assyria have been yielding up their secrets to modern research. The veil has begun to lift from off dark continents of history. As soon as the key was found to the hieroglyphics of Egypt and the cuneiforms of Assyria, a mighty Hittite people began to emerge. They appeared chiefly as a nation of warriors in constant conflict with the great monarchies on their borders, but in almost every detail they corresponded to the Hittites of the Bible. Instead of at once admitting that the Bible references to the